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Middle School Reading Clubs: A First Step Toward Increasing Pleasure-Reading Time

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Middle School Reading Clubs: A First Step
Toward Increasing Pleasure-Reading Time

by

James A. Fazzone

A Final Report
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education

National EdD Program for Educational Leaders
Nova Southeastern University
Cluster: Bucks County IV

August 2000

Vice Principal
Reynolds Middle School
Hamilton Township School District
Hamilton Square, New Jersey

Approval Page

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As Committee Chair, and on behalf of the Committee Reader, Karen Ruskin, EdD, I affirm that this report meets the expectations of the National EdD Program for Educational Leaders as a representation of applied field research resulting in educational improvement.

Patricia H. Grimes, EdD, Committee Chair

signature

approval date

As Program Dean, I affirm that this report meets the expectations of the National EdD Program for Educational Leaders as a representation of applied field research resulting in educational improvement.

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Affirmations Page

Certificate of Authorship Statement

I certify that I am the author of this report and that any assistance I received in its preparation is fully acknowledged and disclosed in the paper. I have also cited any sources from which I used data, ideas, or words, either quoted directly or paraphrased.

participant's signature

date

Research With Human Subjects Statement

I certify that I have read and am cognizant of the principles specified in the Policies and Procedures of Nova Southeastern University's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. I further affirm that, in all research activities associated with the development of my practicum for the National EdD Program for Educational Leaders, I adhered to these principles and to the regulations regarding ethical treatment of human research subjects of my own district and school system.

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Abstract

Middle School Reading Clubs: A First Step Toward Increasing Pleasure-Reading Time

This report describes the plans for, implementation of, and results of a reading club program conducted at a middle school. This program was a modification of an unsuccessful one that was criticized by the staff and students for lack of structure and meaning. The literature supported the need for students taking time out of the school day for pleasure reading. Krashen (1993), Atwell (1998), and Irvin (1998) all have recommended that students should be permitted to read appropriate reading materials of their choice and that they should be provided with a wide range of materials from which to choose. Therefore, a revised club program, the Take Time To Read Club, designed to offer an alternative to pullout clubs, was agreed upon by a club revision committee.

Three objectives were established. The 1st objective was to increase the amount of time students spent reading for pleasure. The 2nd objective was to improve the perception of the reading club program as measured by an 80% positive response rate to a faculty survey. The 3rd objective was to increase reading achievement levels by at least 5% as measured by Metropolitan Achievement Test and Grade 8 Early Warning Test (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) scores. None of the 3 objectives was completely realized as the result of this practicum. However, increases did occur in pleasure-reading times in instances when motivational factors were present. Also, teachers' positive perceptions did increase by 22% to 57%. There were slight increases in test scores in the 6th and 7th grades.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Background

Introduction

This practicum took place at Reynolds Middle School, which is located in Hamilton Township, New Jersey. Hamilton Township is a suburban community situated adjacent to the City of Trenton, New Jersey, which is the state capitol. Reynolds Middle School houses Grades 6 through 8 and is one of three middle schools in the district. Reynolds Middle School's total student population is approximately 1,100 students.

A reading club program was initiated at Reynolds Middle School in September of 1996 to increase the amount of time students spent on pleasure reading. However, the implementation of the program failed to increase the amount of pleasure reading done by seventh- and eighth-grade students.

A baseline for student achievement was determined by compiling the Reynolds Middle School standardized test scores in reading from the years 1996 to 1998. The standardized tests used at Reynolds Middle School during these years were the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) for the sixth and seventh grades and the New Jersey Grade 8 Early Warning Test (EWT) (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) for the eighth grade. The EWT is a test

administered to all eighth-grade students in New Jersey to measure their reading levels. The MAT scores were calculated for 1999 and then compared with the 1996, 1997, and 1998 school years' MAT reading scores.

In 1996, 1997, and 1998, Reynolds Middle School MAT scores were calculated using a mean normal curve equivalent (NCE). An NCE ranges from 1 to 99, with a mean score of 50. NCE scores may be compared with other tests that are scored using an NCE. The NCE score for 1999 showed no significant change from the previous 3 years. The NCE Reynolds Middle School MAT scores are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Normal Curve Equivalent Metropolitan Achievement Test
Reading Scores for Reynolds Middle School

Grade	Year			
	1996	1997	1998	1999
6	62.0	60.0	62.0	60.1
7	60.0	61.0	62.0	61.2

In 1996, 1997, and 1998, total reading scores on the EWT (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) were calculated on a scale of 1 to 250. The school's EWT reading scores were as follows: 151.1 in 1996, 150.4 in 1997, and

152.6 in 1998. In 1996-1997, 318 eighth-grade students took the EWT; proficiency levels for reading were 186 students (58.5%) in Level I (students not in need of help), 120 students (37.7%) in Level II (students who might need remedial help), and 12 students (3.8%) in Level III (students in need of remedial help). In 1997-1998, 289 eighth-grade students took the EWT; proficiency levels for reading were 189 students (65.4%) in Level I, 90 students (31.1%) in Level II, and 10 students (3.5%) in Level III.

The EWT (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) reading test was replaced by the Grade 8 Proficiency Assessment (GEPA; New Jersey State Department of Education, 1999) in the 1998-1999 school year. The change in tests makes a comparison with the EWT results all but impossible, according to W. Paul (personal communication, March 1999), Testing Coordinator for the Hamilton Township School District.

Preliminary Investigation Results

Reynolds Middle School introduced a new club program in the fall of 1996. The change in the club program was part of a preliminary investigation to determine if adding a pleasure-reading offering to the club program was feasible. The reading club program was officially implemented and explained through a memo dated September 17, 1996 (see Appendix A). Students were surveyed in the fall and spring of the 1996-1997 school year concerning the program (see

Appendix B).

Reynolds Middle School offers students a club program that operates each Friday during the school year. All of the students participate in the club program. Students are encouraged to participate in a club that interests them. The Reynolds Middle School Club program is divided into two categories: the Take Time To Read club program and the pullout clubs. The Take Time To Read program provides an opportunity for students and homeroom teachers to participate in independent reading for enjoyment. Students choose from appropriate books, magazines, textbooks, and newspapers of personal choice. Teachers remind students to bring appropriate reading material to the Take Time To Read program's reading club each Friday. The reading club involves the following components:

1. Students are encouraged by teachers to read materials that interest them.
2. Teachers model reading while students are reading.
3. Teachers are encouraged to read to students.
4. Discussion of books is encouraged by teachers.

Not all students are involved in the reading clubs. Students who are involved in the pullout clubs report to their pullout club instead of participating in the reading clubs. In the event their pullout club does not meet on club day, however, they would then report to and participate in a Take Time To Read program reading club. Table 2 indicates

the clubs that make up the pullout club program. Teachers who supervise these clubs recruit students through announcements and sign-ups. The only limitation placed on a club is a 1:25 teacher:student ratio.

Table 2

Pullout Clubs

Club	Room	Teacher
Computer	B-104	K. Blair
Drama	Auditorium	M. Chernoski
Drill Team and Jump Rope	Cafeteria	K. Morgan
Keyboarding	C-7	L. DeSantis
Environmental	Library	D. McManimon
Intramurals	Gymnasium	Physical education staff
Jazz	A-106	G. Balog
Math	B-106	S. Lombardi
Multicultural	C-1	A. Wheeler
Newspaper	B-101	B. Hauenstein
Student Council	Library	J. Konjushok
Weather	C-4	F. Bencivengo
Yearbook	B-105	S. Morgan
Rocket	C-1	C. Hibbs

As shown in Table 2, the pullout clubs represent a

variety of offerings. They are scheduled in various locations throughout the building. Teacher volunteers are assigned to supervise the pullout clubs. Pullout clubs are initiated based on both student and teacher interest. Any student who is not in one of the clubs remains in homeroom for the Take Time To Read program reading club. Clubs are reviewed annually for additions and deletions, and changes are implemented at the beginning of each school year. Changes come from suggestions made by teachers, students, and administrators.

A student survey was used to assess changes in student reading habits at Reynolds Middle School during the 1996-1997 school year. The reading survey, which contained several questions concerning reading habits, was completed by the students in October 1996 and in May 1997. The May 1997 survey was based on 801 student responses. Students were again asked to respond to the question, "Do you read for pleasure?" The number of students who responded yes was 423, or 53% of the students surveyed. Those who responded no totaled 378, or 47% of the students surveyed. Based on the survey results, the number of students reading for pleasure decreased by 8% during the trial period. However, sixth-grade students' reading for pleasure increased by 2.5%. Students were also asked,

1. "What is the best book you have ever read?"
2. "What is your favorite kind of book: mystery,

romance, adventure, science fiction, biography, sports, romance, poetry, historical, or other?"

3. "Who is your favorite author?"

4. "How do you choose which book you read?"

Answers to these questions were utilized by the researcher to identify reading preferences in order to provide reading materials that would interest students.

In January 1997, the faculty was surveyed for their opinions on the Take Time To Read program (see Appendix C). Teachers were asked to respond to the question, "Do you think the Take Time To Read program is working in your homeroom?" Of the teachers who responded, 7 answered *yes*, 11 answered *no*, and 2 answered *undecided*.

Various subjective answers were given to the other questions. Teachers who reported problems with the reading clubs stated that students were not bringing materials to the reading clubs and were not reading. Other concerns included interruptions when students were called from the classroom and when announcements were made over the intercom. Teachers also complained that student traffic in the hallways was disruptive to the reading clubs. The following comments were given concerning why the program was not working (names withheld for confidentiality):

1. "Time should be used to complete homework, do projects, make-up tests (absentees), etc."

2. "The students dislike the reading program. They must

be reminded weekly of the purpose. It takes time to settle them in; however, at this point, they are reading."

3. "It is very difficult to keep students reading all period. Reading to the students for 10-15 minutes seems to help."

4. "Forced reading does not work. It might help if the homeroom teacher had some credibility from the administration. It might help if the administration announced the program and helped talk it up."

5. "Students show up for the reading club without books."

6. "Students can't sit still on Friday afternoon."

7. "Students want to read voluntarily, not because they have to. Students want to get their homework done."

8. "One reason for eighth graders not participating with the clubs is that they had a different club program in sixth and seventh grades."

9. "Students don't come prepared."

10. "Students in general are not interested in reading during eighth period, especially on Fridays."

11. "Eighth graders won't read."

12. "Students do not want to read. Most of them must be forced to do so."

13. "Forced 'leisure' reading is an oxymoron, and it is stressful to enforce. Students actually prefer doing homework when given the option."

Teachers who reported success with the reading clubs offered various reasons for the success. Some teachers stated that reading aloud to students and modeling reading while students were engaged in silent reading seemed to be effective motivational strategies. Other teachers stated that when interesting books, magazines, and other pleasure reading materials were available in the classroom, students were motivated to read. One teacher who provided many current magazines for boys and girls in her classroom stated that her class could barely wait until Friday for reading club day. Of those who commented on how to improve the clubs, the following responses were given:

1. Make an announcement at 2:25 p.m. stating that reading club is about to begin and all hallways are to be totally emptied. Keep intercom messages to a minimum at this time. Silence itself will convey the message. At approximately 5 minutes before 3:00 p.m., announce the official end of the Take Time To Read Clubs.
2. "As a classroom teacher, I should be able to use my time as I see fit. I believe we need to be trusted in a professional manner and not dictated to so we are all the same."
3. "Remind the students a day ahead of time to bring a book. Also increase the library use in the reading classes to every other week."
4. "Less pullouts during the period; less interruptions

during the period."

5. "More flexibility doing other activities on a Friday afternoon (puzzles, games, etc.)."

6. "Have them read their book report books."

7. "Allow the students to sit where they like, even at the teacher's desk."

8. "Get a small supply of books for the classrooms."

9. "Have clubs on a different day."

10. "Give students different choices during club day or do away with them."

11. "Make a push for the clubs. Explain them during assemblies and have competitions and awards."

12. "Some type of prize for books read."

Statement of the Problem

Although the research supported the premise that increased time spent by students reading for pleasure is beneficial (Krashen, 1993), the question remained whether or not reading clubs could increase the amount of time students spent reading for pleasure at Reynolds Middle School. Based on the input from teachers, parents, and students, as well as administrative observations, the addition of the reading club program was perceived to have positive potential. Implementation on a permanent basis, however, required innovations before the program gained acceptance from all groups. The fact that pleasure reading did not increase during the preliminary investigation indicated that

improvements were necessary in order for the reading clubs to increase pleasure reading by students. Based on results from the teachers' survey, only 35% of the teachers were positive about the reading club program in existence in 1997. The survey for sixth-grade students revealed that, in October 1996, 172 students read for pleasure and in 1997, 196 students read for pleasure. These data showed that the pleasure reading increased 2.5% in the sixth grade and decreased 11.5% in the seventh grade and 33% in the eighth grade.

As stated earlier, this program failed to increase pleasure reading in Reynolds Middle School students in 1996-1997. Possible causes included a low level of teacher support and lack of availability of interesting reading materials, valid incentives, and appropriate guest speakers. The baseline standardized test scores in reading at Reynolds Middle School from the years 1996 to 1998 also showed no significant increase.

Therefore, as a result of the implementation of the reading club program, the following problems were identified for future study: (a) Based on the student survey, reading for pleasure decreased at Reynolds Middle School during the trial period by 8%; (b) the teacher survey showed that, although 7 teachers responded positively to the reading club program, 11 teachers responded negatively and 2 were undecided (i.e., only 35% viewed the program as effective);

and (c) there was no significant improvement in the MAT and EWT (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) reading scores to indicate a success rate of the program for the previous 3 years.

Based on the research concerning reading for pleasure, it was the intention of the researcher to increase the amount of time Reynolds Middle School students spent reading for pleasure and, at the same time, improve the club program in general. Because the student survey indicated that schoolwide pleasure reading actually decreased during the preliminary investigation, improvements were implemented in order to increase pleasure reading. It was also kept in mind that the teachers had many suggestions to improve the club program from their perspective, and a commitment was made to honor their opinions. To the extent that these two problems were addressed, student pleasure reading and teacher reading club approval were expected to increase.

Chapter 2

The Setting

School and District

Reynolds Middle School, in Hamilton Township, New Jersey, is located in a middle- to upper-class community and is one of three middle schools in the district. The school is divided into two houses and serves a total of 1,100 children. Students who live beyond a 1-mile radius from the school are bused. Hamilton Township is one of the larger school districts in the state of New Jersey. It is located adjacent to Trenton, which is the state capitol.

Demographics

According to a demographic study prepared by Stanton, Leggett, and Associates and the Grier Partnership (Abramson, 1998), Hamilton Township, New Jersey, is a suburban community that is typical of many towns found in the northeastern United States. It has ties to colonial times, and it experienced tremendous growth in post-World War II years. It is a suburb of Trenton, the state capitol. The population more than doubled from 1950 (41,156) to 1990 (86,553). During the 1990s, this growth has ceased.

Most residents of Hamilton Township work hard to maintain their suburban status. The 1990 census revealed that 70% of all persons 16 years of age or older were in the labor force, either working or looking for a job. Government

jobs accounted for 26.5% of the workforce. At the time of the census, 68% of families had two or more wage earners. Among women 16 and above, 63% were in the labor force. The rate was even higher for women with children (Abramson, 1998).

Hamilton Township is solidly middle-class. The median household income at the time of the census was just short of \$50,000. However, fewer than 6% of all families had incomes of \$100,000 or more. At the other end of the income spectrum, few were poor. Only 3% of households contained a member who had received some form of public assistance in 1989. Fewer than 4% had incomes that placed them below the federal poverty level (Abramson, 1998).

Most Hamilton Township residents are home owners. In 1990, 74% of households reported that they owned the homes they occupied. That year, 80% reported their homes being valued at between \$75,000 and \$200,000. Two out of five stated their house was paid off, while three out of five still held mortgages (Abramson, 1998).

Hamilton Township had nearly 21,000 children under 19 years of age in 1990. Of these 21,000, nearly 68% were enrolled in school. Of those enrolled in school, 92% were attending public schools. The census found that most would be expected to graduate, as only 269 16- to 19-year-olds in the Hamilton Township schools had dropped out of school before graduation in the 1989-1990 school year (Abramson,

1998).

The New Jersey Department of Education ranks school districts by their socioeconomic status. The department has developed a scale to rank schools by socioeconomic status that is known as the district factor grouping system, which measures a combination of income, occupation, and education (see Appendix D; New Jersey State Department of Education, Division of Finance, 1993). The Hamilton Township Schools are designated as FG in the district factor grouping system, which places them fourth out of eight levels.

Organizational Characteristics

The administrative structure in the Hamilton Township School District includes a nine-member board of education and the superintendent of schools, who is chief school administrator and reports directly to the board of education. The next two line administrators are the directors: a director of secondary education and a director of elementary education. The principals of the individual schools report directly to one of the directors, and the vice principals report to the principals. Reynolds Middle School has two vice principals. The vice principals share discipline in the school by administering discipline to the students in their respective houses, known as the Lenape House and the Mohawk House. The other duties related to the administration of the building are divided between these two administrators.

Internal Influences

The school's rotating clubs have been in place for several years. Since the reading clubs were put in place at the beginning of the 1996-1997 school year, a trial period had existed. The teachers, students, and parents at Reynolds Middle School were determined to be a major factor in the success of the reading clubs. These three groups were, for the most part, in agreement that the Take Time To Read program was a good thing, and thus, there was a reasonable commitment to maintaining the reading clubs. Opposition from some teachers was evident in the suggestions given in the teacher survey. Some students asked the vice principal for more choices of pullout clubs. By addressing some of the complaints in reference to the reading and pullout clubs, the writer hoped to improve the commitment to and efficiency of the reading club program as well as the pullout clubs.

Some teachers have expressed appreciation informally to the vice principal, noting that they prefer the reading club program to the former rotating club program because the reading club program is more structured with respect to taking attendance and classroom management. Teachers have also expressed support for the program because students have the ability to acquire reading materials from several sources. Other teachers have verbalized informally that they approved of the ability of students to sign books out of the library, bring their own books, take books from the rotating

cart that the vice principal brought to each class on Fridays, or even share books with other students.

Complaints from students, cited in a May 1998 petition about the program, were that more interesting pullout clubs would give students more options to the reading club program. Some teachers volunteered to sponsor additional pullout clubs. Some problems with adding additional pullout clubs were that there were not enough teachers to cover additional pullout clubs and there were no additional rooms to house the clubs.

External Influences

Existing external influences affecting the club program included not enough time in the day for students to engage in pleasure reading. The community has a strong sports orientation with many competitive recreational teams. The practice and game schedules take up a large portion of the students' time. Homework assignments are also demanding on the students' schedules. This leaves little or no time in the day for students to pleasure read, making the reading club time a rare benefit. Therefore, one might conclude that providing pleasure reading time would be an instant success. The problem that teachers reported, however, was that many students were not interested in reading on Friday afternoons. Uninterested students have been a major problem for some teachers during reading clubs.

Some local and national businesses have been willing to

make donations to the reading club program. A local soft drink company donated cups, coolers, and soft drinks for all reading club program incentive parties held at Reynolds Middle School. Pizza Hut also donated pizza as a reading incentive for sixth graders through the Book It program. Additionally, Princeton University administrators sent a letter to the vice principal offering to donate tickets to Reynolds Middle School for Princeton University athletic events to use as reading incentives. They also were interested in having their athletes volunteer as guest readers.

The Book-It program is a reading incentive program sponsored by the Pizza Hut Corporation. The program offers a free pizza to every student who meets a reading goal determined by the local school. Students in Grades 1 through 6 were eligible to participate. The vice principal sent for the Pizza Hut Book-It kit during the spring of 1997 for the 1998-1999 school year. All sixth graders were eligible to participate in the Book-It program at Reynolds Middle School. The vice principal requested the Pizza Hut incentive again in the spring of 1998 for the 1999-2000 school year.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Pleasure Reading and Student Achievement

The San Diego County Office of Education in San Diego, California, has compiled several research findings on Free Voluntary Reading. Mayfield (1996), who was associated with the San Diego County Office of Education, expressed that the single most important factor associated with reading achievement, more than socioeconomic status or any instructional approach, is independent reading. Writing style, vocabulary, spelling, and grammar improve with increased free voluntary reading. Several of the studies indicated that students who participated in free voluntary reading did as well or better on reading comprehension tests when compared with students given traditional skill-based reading instruction.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (as cited in "Reading Proficiency," 1996) reported that "the connection between leisure reading activities and reading achievement has been established by numerous studies" (p. 2). The connection between pleasure reading and reading achievement appears to be that students who read for pleasure are practicing their reading skills more readily than those who do not. Students who read for pleasure are certainly exposed to a broader scope of topics than their

schoolmates who are not involved in pleasure reading.

Devoting School Time to Pleasure Reading

The reviewed research supports schools devoting time to pleasure reading during the school day. The literature also recommends that students be given an opportunity to choose their own reading materials (Sanacore, 1992). According to Atwell (1989), providing students with real time for silent independent reading during the school day is perhaps the strongest experience that we can provide students to demonstrate the value of literacy. According to Krashen (1993), perhaps the most significant way of encouraging reading by children is to expose them to light reading, a kind of reading that is typically not endorsed by schools, and a type of reading that many children are deprived of for economic or ideological reasons. Light reading is arguably the way in which nearly all of us learned to read.

The curriculum goals placed on students result in much time spent on seatwork and classroom activities. Little if any time is left over for independent reading or for shared, large-group reading experiences in materials chosen by the students. Numerous studies demonstrate that uninterrupted periods of time spent on private and shared reading, along with access to a wide variety of materials that interest the readers, not only motivate students to read and read well but help to promote lifelong reading and an attraction to books (Manna, Misheff, & Robitaille, 1988).

Sanacore (1992) believed that reading for pleasure is being taken away from our students, owing to demands on time for state mandates and testing proficiencies. Sanacore asserted that, if we continue to yield to external mandates, we are certain to emphasize teacher-directed activities that support testing outcomes. We also might be seduced into believing that using school time for developing a love of reading is a waste of time. By surrendering control of our decision making, we translate to our students a loss of ownership concerning their lifetime literacy. Described another way, if we are prohibited from encouraging independent reading in school because it is considered a frill, then our students will not experience a sense of ownership in selecting books that they want to read. They also will be denied the opportunity to develop a lifelong habit of reading enjoyment.

Students are receptive to teachers who are enthusiastic about reading. Sanacore (1992) suggested that teachers must model this by doing their own pleasure reading at the same time, not planning lessons or performing clerical tasks. Reading in front of the students appears to be an important component in any reading-for-pleasure program.

Irvin (1998) recommended that class time be allotted for pleasure reading. She stated that there is no substitute for providing class time to read and that the teacher needs to read while the students read. Many times, teachers are

tempted to grade a paper or catch up on clerical tasks during reading periods, but students are rarely fooled. If reading is important, then the teacher must read.

Atwell (1998) and Carbo (1997) understood the importance of having students choose their own reading material as well as offering school time for pleasure reading. Atwell stated that, based on research showing that sustained-silent-reading programs boost students' fluency as readers, it makes sense to encourage students to increase their reading by allowing them to read their own books at least 1 day each week.

Atwell (1998) further explained that, if reading for pleasure increases fluency, why should we limit pleasure reading to only 1 day per week? Why not give students the opportunity to pleasure read on a daily basis? Students enjoy self-selected reading because they are the ones making the decisions on the choices of the books they read. Teachers tend to feel uncomfortable providing large blocks of time for pleasure reading. They tend to feel that there are too many wonderful selections in the literature anthology to cover and too many activities that schools have invested years in developing to waste valuable class time dallying with students' uninformed tastes. Consequently, teachers tend to cling to large doses of curriculum and small doses of pleasure reading.

Teachers should add pleasure reading in small

increments if they are uncomfortable providing pleasure reading for 5 days per week all at once. As the language arts curriculum gives way to pleasure reading, teachers will find that students will become full-time readers. When it comes to teaching students to read, students are the best teachers.

Students have taught us to fill the classroom with books as well as magazines, short stories, plays, biographies, histories, humorous essays, and poetry (Stoll & Walsh, 1995). They show us that, if we give them the chance, they will devour books. If teachers will provide time to read and books for students to read, they will find that they will never have enough books to satisfy the students.

The reading-for-pleasure program that was implemented at Reynolds Middle School allowed students to choose their own reading materials. It was the hope of the Club Revision Committee and the vice principal that letting students choose their own reading materials would motivate them to increase their pleasure (Koskinen & Palmer, 1998). On the issues of respecting student choices in pleasure reading, Sanacore (1992) believed that, although we sometimes become anxious about our students' choices, we must remember that, as readers gain experience reading for pleasure, they tend to select appropriate materials. This positive experience with reading builds independence and self-esteem, both of which are important for creating lifelong readers.

Pleasure-Reading Habits of Children

Cole (1996) stated that it is natural for children to enjoy reading. It is, therefore, unnatural to use an approach that turns children off to reading. Allowing children's interests to dictate what they read is motivating and generates enthusiasm for the reading materials. Reading along with the children is also motivating for the learners. Even when children are proficient at independent reading, modeling by the teacher or parent will aid children in placing value on reading.

According to Bialostok (1992), children engage in their reading if they see the teacher read. Teachers should not expect their children to read if students do not see them read. Books should be readily available to children. Children should not be forced to read if they do not want to read.

Manning (1996) asked the questions, "Why do middle-level students seem to read less during their leisure time than they did in elementary school? How can educators motivate adolescents to read?" (p. 32). Some of the suggestions from Manning included allowing the students to select their own rewards for reading; reading books aloud to students and modeling enthusiasm for reading; encouraging interest in short stories, then working up to longer books; and involving parents and families in students' reading, forming reading clubs, and providing time for recreational

reading.

According to Leonhardt (1997), if children can develop a love of reading, they will spend more time reading. Avid readers acquire a more complex understanding of language. Because reading gives children a wider frame of reference to draw on for comprehension, learning is easier for children who read often. Even if a child reads only fiction, the child will pick up more facts on history, geography, politics, and science.

Avid readers are exposed to a wide variety of possibilities and opportunities. Children who read regularly develop critical-thinking skills by following complex arguments and multifaceted plots. Children can pick up the joy of reading through permission and encouragement to choose reading materials for themselves. Terrifying thrillers, comic novels, and gentle romances are fine choices to develop in children a love of reading (Leonhardt, 1997).

It is easy for adults to forget the delight they took in some of the fairly light reading they chose as children. *Nancy Drew*, *The Hardy Boys*, and comic books are certainly not the classics, but many adults developed a love of reading through their early experiences with these kinds of books. *Goosebumps* and *The Babysitters Club* are not usually thought of as great literature, but if students want to read

these books, they should be encouraged to do so. Soon they will tire of these less challenging kinds of books and look for more demanding materials to read. By the time children are ready to seek more complex books, they will be reading a little faster and better (Leonhardt, 1997).

Some of Leonhardt's (1997) recommendations on how to choose books for children include searching out books that children will like. Teachers and parents are going to have to take the initiative in finding reading material for their children. It simply does not occur to most children that there are books or magazines on "cool" subjects such as baseball, sports card collecting, or attack reptiles. In practical terms, parents are the ones with the money and the car. Teachers and parents need to be creative and persistent. If your child lives and dies for chess battles, mount an offensive on the hobby and games section of your bookstore. If your student spends all of his or her free time kicking soccer balls, go the library, bookstore, or news stand and select any books you can find on soccer.

Richie (1989) believed that most adolescents want to read books they can read and understand easily. They are interested in books that they can relate to and that will help them through some of their teenage problems. Young adult novels can address these needs. These novels are typically between 150 and 200 pages, have singular plots, and are written from a point of view that allows adolescents

to interpret the story. These books have a controlled vocabulary with fairly short sentences and basic concepts, thereby reinforcing students' confidence in their reading-mastery skills. The characters are typically youthful and do not rely on adults to solve their conflicts. Youthful novels mirror societal problems and are valuable books that should be offered to adolescents.

The most important aspect of providing school time for pleasure reading seems to be developing a love of reading in the students that they will carry with them when they leave the formal school setting. Odean (1998) revealed that one aspect of learning that many boys neglect on their way to adulthood is developing a love of reading. If they are lucky, at some point, boys find books exciting and enjoyable. As young children, they may see adults or older siblings reading and want to try it themselves. Books then start to become a rewarding part of their lives, providing both entertainment and education. As boys move toward adolescence, all too many quit reading for pleasure because it is not popular, and a reader risks being labeled as passive and possibly effeminate.

Odean (1998) also alleged that, in an age in which information is increasingly the key to success and our society requires a broad understanding of other people and cultures, the ability to read well is crucial. Parents who understand the importance of reading worry that their sons

read too little and save their youthful enthusiasm for other more active pastimes. It also is troubling that, in standardized testing, boys consistently score lower in reading than girls do. Boys make up two thirds of special education classes in the United States, a much higher figure than in many other countries. Just as girls need encouragement in math and science, boys clearly need to be better motivated to read and care about books. Odean further explained that our society makes it hard for boys who like to read, especially as they get older. Rarely do adults approach a girl who is reading a book and question them as to why they are reading. However, boys who are reading are many times approached and asked why they are not outside playing ball instead of reading. Comments such as this are usually made by fathers, brothers, or other male adults when they "catch" a young male reading.

Reading Aloud to Students

Irvin (1998) had some thoughts on reading aloud to students. She asserted that students of all ages love reading aloud. They will often develop an interest in reading a particular book because one by the same author has been previously read to them. Students also improve vocabulary knowledge and thinking abilities by having others read to them.

Irvin (1998) further maintained that a read-aloud program can occur within language arts classes or it can be

a schoolwide effort. Adolescents should be read aloud to every day from a variety of books, including nonfiction. Reading to students creates a common experience and a forum for responding orally and in writing. Recreational reading and reading aloud provide exposure to a wide variety of literature and are excellent vehicles for developing vocabulary.

Odean (1997) agreed that reading aloud to adolescents has benefits. She contended that older children still benefit from listening to books read aloud. Often, parents assume that once children can read to themselves, reading aloud serves no purpose, which is not true. Cullinan (1992) found that even most older children understand far more words when hearing them spoken than they can recognize in the page. Books tend to use vocabulary that is more complex, so reading aloud introduces a conglomerate of new words in a context that suggests word definitions. Later, when a child runs across such a word on the page in his or her own reading, he or she will have heard the word before and will have a better sense of what it means.

Krashen (1993) pointed to information from the research stating that children who are read to tend to read more. He stated that children who are read to at home read more on their own and, when teachers read stories to children and discuss the stories, the result is that children read more. Research on the effects of in-school reading aloud to

children on increasing interest in reading has been extensive in kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2. The research also has implications at the college level: University students of all ages who were entering college for the first time were read to 1 hour per week for 13 weeks. Selections included works by Twain, Salinger, Poe, and Thurber, and the reading was discussed afterwards. Pitts (1986) reported that the class that was read to checked out more books, and better books, from the reading lab than did the students in other basic skills classes. In addition, the class that was read to did better on the final essay. The results of increased student achievement owing to students having been read to are quite apparent.

Motivation

Koskinen and Palmer (1994) pointed to four factors that motivate children to read. They cited prior experiences with books, social interactions about books, book access, and book choice as factors that motivate students to read. Gambrell (1996) suggested six classroom factors that foster motivation for reading. These factors include a teacher who is a reading model, a book-rich classroom environment, opportunities for choice, familiarity with books, social interactions about books, and literacy-related incentives that reflect the value of reading. As Demos (1989) asserted, it is important to consider the motivational factors in a pleasure-reading program in the middle school setting that

increase the chances for the program's success.

This review of the literature overwhelmingly supports using school time for pleasure reading. The reading club program model implemented at Reynolds Middle School provides time for pleasure reading on a weekly basis. The model provides time for reading during the club periods, recreational rewards for reading achievement, and a positive role model aspect for both boys and girls through teacher behavior modeling and guest reader authority figures.

Chapter 4

Methods

Objectives

After having analyzed the results of the preliminary investigation and completed further research on pleasure reading at the middle school level, the following objectives were established for this practicum.

Objective 1. Increase the amount of time students read for pleasure. As a result of the work done, the positive responses to a student reading survey (see Appendix E) should have increased compared with the surveys completed at the end of the preliminary investigation. The goal was an increase of 5% or more as measured by repetition of the prior surveys.

Objective 2. Improve the positive perception of the reading club program as measured by teachers' responses to the reading club evaluation surveys given during the preliminary investigation. The objective was to increase positive responses to 80% compared with only 35% positive responses given earlier (see Appendix F).

Objective 3. Increase reading achievement levels by at least 5% as measured by MAT and EWT (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) scores compared with scores from the previous 3 years.

Strategies

In order to increase the amount of pleasure reading done by Reynolds Middle School students, several strategies were explored and implemented. Following the suggestion of Koskinen and Palmer (1994), increasing the amount of available reading materials to the students during the reading clubs was planned. The media specialist was approached to increase the amount of interesting books available to students to borrow (Leonhardt, 1997). A cart with pleasure reading books was circulated to the homerooms during club periods. The vice principal checked with the principal concerning availability of funds for pleasure-reading materials, and the librarian ordered \$500 in books for club use.

Taking Gambrell's (1996) suggestions, the administration offered incentives to students who met the criteria of reading three books for pleasure during a semester (or during an entire year for those who did not meet the semester requirement). Incentives included pizza parties, class parties, guest readers, and books for ownership. Any additional incentives that were suggested during the study were considered for inclusion.

Teachers' modeling of reading during the reading clubs and reading aloud were encouraged by the administration as suggested by Odean (1998) and Irvin (1998). The administration addressed the staff during faculty meetings concerning the research on modeling reading to students. The

administration reminded teachers that this was a time set aside not only for students to pleasure read but for teachers to read as well.

The vice principal visited the reading clubs and incentive parties to ask students what they liked to read. The vice principal asked students what books, magazines, and other materials they enjoyed reading (Leonhardt, 1997). The vice principal also inquired to see if the students liked any particular authors and sought positive role model guest readers, especially male authority figures (Odean, 1998).

The parents were approached for their opinions on pleasure reading for students at Reynolds Middle School (Manning, 1996). A survey was completed by parents in the fall of 1999 to gather input on their opinions concerning the pleasure reading habits of Reynolds Middle School students (see Appendix G).

Implementation Design

The researcher conducted a practicum to implement a reading club program at the middle school level. In the interim, between the completion of the preliminary investigation (June 1998) and the planned beginning of the practicum (January 1999), some preliminary work was completed regarding the Guest Reader program. Teachers were contacted regarding the Guest Reader program and were encouraged to invite guest readers to read to their respective reading clubs in December 1998. The invitation

process was repeated formally in December 1999 and informally throughout 2000. The following actions were taken at Reynolds Middle School in order to implement the reading club program.

Students were also informed of reading incentives for the 1998-1999 school year. Any students who read three or more books during the first semester were rewarded in January 1999. Students who read three or more books during the second semester were rewarded with an ice cream party in May 1999.

Time Line

January 1999. Reading clubs met each Friday during eighth period, which was the activity period. All students who were not involved in a pullout club participated in the reading clubs.

A cart with pleasure-reading books was circulated to the homerooms during club periods, and the vice principal provided ongoing monitoring to solicit feedback and suggestions. Several students signed out books. Teachers and students made positive comments concerning the book cart. Several students who already had books asked if the cart would be back during the next week. The students also were interested in newspapers that were delivered by the vice principal.

Reading incentive pizza parties took place in January 1999. The parties were scheduled by house and grade. The

numbers of students who met the reading incentive and attended pizza parties for their particular house and grade were as follows: 109 students from Lenape sixth grade on January 7, 6 students from Mohawk sixth grade on January 9, 6 students from Lenape seventh grade on January 14, 0 students from Mohawk seventh grade on January 20, 0 students from Lenape eighth grade on January 21, and 0 students from Mohawk eighth grade on January 22.

In an informal interview, D. McGinn (personal communication, January 1999), a sixth-grade teacher in the Mohawk house, reported to the vice principal that many other students had read the three books required to receive the incentive but those students were not interested in writing the one-page summary which was required to verify that three books were read.

February 1999. The Guest Reader program began this month. Reading clubs continued as usual each Friday unless a guest reader read to the class. Classes had sent invitations to potential guest readers who had been approved by administrators. Guest readers read to homeroom classes on Fridays. A typical visit involved a guest reader reading a book passage. Books were either selected by the guest or provided by the teacher. A question-and-answer period usually followed the reading. Guest readers in February included A. Kaszimer, President, Hamilton Township Education Association; L. Rudolph, former Reynolds Middle School teacher; S.

Stevenson, story teller; N. Bencivengo, Superintendent, Hamilton Township Schools; and D. Gallagher, former New York Mets outfielder.

At the beginning of the club periods, an announcement was made over the intercom by the vice principal reminding students that they could sign out books from the library. The cart with pleasure reading books was also circulated to the homerooms during club periods, and the vice principal continued to provide ongoing monitoring to solicit feedback and suggestions. Some homeroom teachers complained that students were not reading, but many other teachers stated that students were reading. Other teacher complaints included that scheduling clubs on Fridays was too late in the week because students were tired and that another day would have been better. Teachers also reported that there were not enough interesting reading materials.

March 1999. Reading clubs as well as the Guest Reader program continued each Friday. Guest readers in March included S. Morgan, a Reynolds Middle School teacher; E. Zamorski, a former Reynolds Middle School teacher; and J. Femiano, a Reynolds Middle School substitute teacher. *USA Today* was added to the pleasure reading cart that was circulated to the homeroom classes during club periods. Complaints and suggestions to the vice principal in March included that some students were not motivated to read because the cart did not arrive at their rooms early enough

in the reading club period. Because it was not possible to distribute early or to have several carts, the vice principal agreed to start in a different hallway each week in order that no single hallway would always receive the cart late.

April 1999. As the vice principal continued to circulate the reading club book cart and monitor the Guest Reader program each Friday, several new concerns and issues arose. Teacher P. Kabo (personal communication, April 1999) asked the vice principal if a book concerning professional wrestling was acceptable for the Take Time To Read program. The teacher reported that, although a student was very interested in the book, the book also included profanities and violence. The vice principal discussed this issue with the principal, who agreed to allow the student to read this book if written parental permission was obtained.

Furthermore, teacher C. Connor utilized several books on audiotape that she acquired on her own. She reported great success with tapes and recommended their use in other homerooms (personal communication, April 1999).

Guest readers in April included K. Morgan, a Reynolds Middle School teacher, and A. Brown, the New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture. Brown sat and talked with the vice principal for approximately 20 minutes before the vice principal realized who he was. As a result of this, the vice principal requested at the next faculty meeting that he be

introduced to guest readers as soon as they arrived.

May 1999. Guest readers in May included E. Zamorski, former Reynolds Middle School teacher, and C. Cimino, NBC New York weather correspondent. Ice cream incentive parties also took place in May (see Appendix H). Any student who read three or more books and completed a summary of each book was invited to the party. The ice cream incentive parties were scheduled by house and grade. The numbers of students who met the reading incentive and attended ice cream parties for their particular house and grade were as follows: 72 students from Lenape sixth grade on May 6, 2 students from Mohawk sixth grade on May 18, 0 students from Lenape seventh grade on May 14, 6 students from Mohawk seventh grade on May 19, 1 student from Lenape eighth grade on May 20, and 35 students from Mohawk eighth grade on May 22.

June 1999. Although the Take Time To Read program continued each Friday, no guest readers were scheduled. A cart with pleasure-reading books continued to be circulated to the homerooms during club periods. Comments to the vice principal included concerns from teachers that more reading materials should be available in order to increase students' interest. Teacher F. Wasielewski (personal communication, June 1999) stated that the cart was helpful but that more books would be welcomed. Consequently, the vice principal met with the librarian to plan to procure a wider selection

of materials, including paperbacks of high interest to students. Selections were based on feedback requested from students regarding their suggestions for book genres. However, one teacher, P. Kabo (personal communication, June 1999), reported to the vice principal that she had plenty of books in her room and did not need the book cart at all.

July 1999. The vice principal discussed the reading club program with the principal at informal meetings during July. Decisions involving improvements and other adjustments to the Take Time To Read program were made during these meetings. Plans and dates for an incentive pizza party during the first semester and an ice cream party during the second semester as a part of the program for the 1999-2000 school year were discussed. The administrators also discussed improvements and other adjustments to the Guest Reader program that had been implemented during the previous semester. They evaluated past readers and discussed prospective readers.

The summer school remedial reading teacher, J. Brugnoli (personal communication, June 1999), reported that her students' reading levels were in the second- to fourth-grade range. Therefore, the vice principal purchased several Archie comic books to broaden the Grades 6, 7, and 8 summer school pleasure-reading program. These comic books were chosen because they were written at a second-grade reading level but dealt with high school characters and topics. J.

Brugnoli reported that the comics were very popular in the classroom. She also reported that students were asking for more comic books after exhausting the initial supply.

August 1999. The principal and the vice principal met to discuss the time lines for memos, final dates for the incentive parties, and the Guest Reader program in general. The vice principal created initial drafts of memos and other correspondence to inform teachers, students, and parents of schedules and other requirements of the Take Time To Read program and the Guest Reader program. Teacher J. Brugnoli (personal communication, August 1999) suggested to the vice principal that comic books might be a welcomed addition to the program because she observed such positive results with her students during the remedial reading program.

September 1999. The vice principal discussed the continuation of the reading club program incentives at team meetings for the Grades 6, 7, and 8 teachers. It was decided to continue to provide reading club incentives (pizza, ice cream, books), a wider range of reading materials, and the Guest Reader program as well as to implement other improvements suggested in earlier feedback. These improvements included making intercom announcements to initiate and reinforce the reading club procedures, having books on audiotape available, and formally introducing guest readers.

A memo regarding the continuation, current results, and

incentive programs as well as the Guest Reader program philosophy was distributed to the staff during the 1st month of school (see Appendix H). The additions to the club program were explained to the faculty at the first faculty meeting of the year, which took place in September 1999. A memo regarding the implementation of overall club programs and the start date for the Take Time To Read program's reading clubs was distributed to all staff during the middle of September (see Appendix I).

Again, for the 1999-2000 school year, the reading clubs were scheduled to take place each Friday during eighth period, which was the activity period. All students who were not involved in a pullout club were offered participation in the reading clubs.

The vice principal evaluated and restocked the pleasure-reading book cart to replace worn and outdated copies, to purchase multiple copies of popular titles, and to add requested items, such as books from the *Harry Potter* series and sports magazines. The vice principal planned specific times to provide ongoing monitoring to solicit feedback and suggestions. Several negative comments concerning the reading clubs were made by students during the student government elections, which were held before the Take Time To Read program had even begun for the 1999-2000 year. Comments by student council officer candidates included a question during a campaign speech, "Raise your

hand if you hate the reading clubs." Almost all students responded by raising their hands. Another candidate promised to eliminate the reading clubs if elected. These students were not elected.

October 1999. The Guest Reader program was explained in more detail to the staff at the first faculty meeting in October. The teachers were directed to facilitate the Guest Reader program by having the students write letters to people who the students believed would be appropriate guest readers. The students were directed to include an explanation of the procedures for the Guest Reader program(see Appendix J). Reading club teachers were given a Guest Reader form that was used to record the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of people their students intended to invite to be guest readers in their homerooms (see Appendix K).

The reading clubs commenced on Friday, October 8, 1999. The reason clubs did not start until this late date was that the first 3 weeks of school traditionally are set aside to address the unusual amount of organizational and procedural duties that can overwhelm teachers at the beginning of a school year. This requirement to prepare and set up schedules for the rest of the year makes the activity period a premium time for both teachers and students. Therefore, the club programs at Reynolds Middle School have historically started in early October. On the 1st day of the

Take Time To Read program, the vice principal circulated the newly stocked cart and personally visited each club to ask if anyone needed a book from the cart or library or if anyone had requests for unavailable books or magazines. After the first Take Time To Read session, teachers reported that the general announcement and a read aloud over the intercom system were effective in clearly identifying the commencement of the reading period.

The reading club program began on Friday, October 8, 1999. All students attended the initial reading club session in order to acclimate the entire school to the reading club's procedures. The pullout clubs then had their first meetings on Friday, October 15, 1999, and pullout club members reported to their specific clubs rather than the reading club sessions. On October 8, to enhance the Take Time To Read program, the vice principal read the first 3 pages of the book *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, by Rowling (1997), to the entire school to begin the reading clubs that day. Several positive comments concerning the reading of these pages were offered to the vice principal by both staff members and students. As a result of these positive comments in reference to the reading of *Harry Potter*, the vice principal began the reading clubs on October 22 by reading Spinelli's (1996) *Crash*. Teachers and students responded positively to the reading of *Crash*, prompting another reading over the intercom system to the

entire school on October 29, 1999. On October 29, the librarian, P. Carmichael, read *Blossom Culp and the Sleep of Death*, by Peck (1986), over the intercom system to the entire school.

November 1999. Teachers were reminded at the November faculty meeting to have the students actively involved in the process of inviting guest readers. Some examples of guest readers included television personalities, politicians, parents, former teachers, administrators, and members of the police force. Final selections included former speakers C. Cimino, N. Bencivengo, D. Gallagher, J. Gilroy, A. Brown, and A. Kaszimer; a new speaker J. Mira, a radio personality; and K. Folis, the school's former vice principal.

During circulation of the reading cart and solicitation of feedback, the vice principal was able to observe as the principal began the club periods by reading excerpts from *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* by Canfield, Hanson, Kirberger (1997). Positive comments on the principal's readings were received by the vice principal from both teachers and students. Teachers were very impressed by the animated reading style of the principal. The vice principal also made rounds with the book cart during the entire reading club period and opened the door of each classroom to see if students were reading and to ask if any students needed a new book from the cart. Comments from teachers

included that many students had developed an increased interest in reading, but others were still not interested. Possible reasons offered by the teachers again included lack of interesting materials being immediately available. These desired materials included recent books and magazines as well as daily newspapers.

December 1999. Teachers were issued a memo from the vice principal requesting their guest reader lists (see Appendix L). The lists were returned to the vice principal by December 11, 1999. Teachers had students fill out the invitations and address the envelopes to the guest readers during club period on December 17, 1999 (see Appendix M). The vice principal was responsible for approving all guest readers and seeing that invitations were sent to the potential guest readers.

The vice principal received extensive feedback from teachers as well as from child study team members and the principal suggesting a more individualized approach for at-risk students who were highly resistant to pleasure reading. As a result, the vice principal selected five students to whom he read aloud during Period 8 any day of the week that these students were available. To reinforce reading skills, as the vice principal read aloud, the students followed along in their own copy of the book. The vice principal read Rowling's (1997) *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. During the approximately 25 minutes of

reading aloud an average of 2 days per week during the month of December, the students followed along in their own books. The group covered over 100 pages during the month of December. Each member of the group reported enjoying the read aloud sessions and stated they looked forward to each session. The vice principal had intended to meet 5 days per week, but administrative responsibilities continually interrupted this planned schedule. Because these reading sessions were so successful and students appeared to be so disappointed when sessions were canceled, the vice principal decided to offer Saturday sessions.

January 2000. Guest reader confirmations were mailed by the vice principal to all guest readers with instructions concerning times, dates, and reading materials (see Appendix N). Homeroom teachers received an approved Guest Reader list on January 20, 2000 (see Appendix O).

Homeroom teachers also received a Guest Reader list as soon as confirmations were received by the main office (see Appendix P). The Guest Reader list was updated as additional confirmations were received.

Reading Club and the Guest Reader programs for the Spring 2000 semester commenced. In response to the overwhelming success of the small-group read aloud program during which students followed along in their books, the

vice principal added Saturdays to the reading sessions available to the five students who were reading Rowling's (1997) *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. All agreed readily, and these Saturday sessions were judged to be successful, as evidenced by all students attending both Saturday sessions. Teacher K. Blair helped with the Saturday read aloud sessions. By adding these 3-hour sessions on Saturdays, the group was able to finish the book. The vice principal provided doughnuts and bagels for breakfast and a lunch of choice for the students. Funding was provided by the school clubs account and the vice principal and teacher K. Blair. Students also stated that they wanted to continue to meet during Period 8 on weekdays in addition to Saturdays.

These students reported that they were happy to attend on Saturdays and appeared grateful to have been invited. The principal also reported that one of the five students, who had formerly been a severe discipline problem as well as academically resistant, was now behaving well and succeeding in the classroom. Another student in the club reported that he had never read an entire book before the small-group reading sessions began. However, after becoming involved in these sessions, this student reported such enjoyment from reading Rowling's (1997) *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* that he had begun Rowling's (1998) *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, and he planned on reading the rest

of the series as well as similar books. Reading teacher P. Kondash reported that his reading in class consequently had improved, and another teacher had purchased Rowling's (1999) *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* for him.

Chapter 5

Results

Findings

Informal visitations, conversations, and interviews, in addition to student, staff, and parent survey results, provided the data needed to compile a detailed analysis of the reading club program progression and an evaluation of the success of the club program in increasing pleasure reading among Reynolds Middle School students. The 1999 reading scores of Reynolds Middle School students were reviewed, analyzed, and compared with 1996, 1997, and 1998 reading scores to determine changes.

The first objective sought an increase of 5% in the number of positive responses to the student pleasure-reading survey compared with the surveys completed at the end of the preliminary investigation. Students were asked to respond to questions concerning their pleasure-reading habits. The student surveys were given to all 1,061 students, and 812 students responded (see Appendix Q). The positive response items totaled 2,323 (54%), and the negative response items totaled 1,974 (46%). The positive responses decreased 3% compared to the student survey at the end of the preliminary investigation. Therefore, Objective 1 was not met.

The second objective was to improve the perception of the reading club program as measured by a comparison of

teacher evaluation surveys results from November 1999 with results of the same survey given in April 2000. A rate of at least 80% positive response was sought compared with a positive response of 35% at the end of the preliminary investigation. Seventy-one teachers were given the survey; 39 responded (see Appendix R). There were 70 (57%) positive response items on the survey and 52 (43%) negative response items. Thus, the objective of 80% positive response was not met. However, there was a 22% increase in positive responses.

The goal of the third objective was an increase of at least 5% in reading achievement levels as measured by MAT and EWT (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1997) scores compared with scores from the previous 3 years. The sixth-grade MAT reading scores declined from a 3-year average (1996-1998) of 61.3 to 60.1 in 1999, and the seventh-grade MAT reading scores rose from a 3-year average (1996-1998) of 61.0 to 61.2 in 1999. The EWT for reading was replaced in 1999 with the GEPA (New Jersey State Department of Education, 1999), which did not have a specific reading score. Because of the implementation of the GEPA during the practicum period, reading scores could not be compared. Therefore, the outcomes of this objective could not be determined.

Twenty-six parent surveys concerning Reynolds Middle School student pleasure-reading habits were distributed to

all parents present at the second Parent-Teacher Association meeting of the year in October 1999. Twenty-one parents responded to the survey (see Appendix S). The results of the survey indicated 85 (67%) positive response items and 41 (33%) negative response items.

Conclusions

During this practicum, the researcher visited reading clubs, circulated a book cart with reading materials, and facilitated the Guest Reader and Reading Incentive programs. Additionally, numerous formal and informal meetings were conducted with teachers to brainstorm strategies for implementing and enhancing the reading clubs. Various strategies, such as beginning reading club sessions with a schoolwide read aloud by a teacher or administrator, opening the library before homeroom for book signouts, and having administrators model reading during the reading clubs were implemented. The vice principal also procured a Barnes and Noble credit card to make it easier for the librarian to purchase popular books such as *Harry Potter* in a more expedient fashion for use in the reading clubs.

Several conclusions became clear to the researcher as a result of the practicum. The most crucial was the need to continue to identify, develop, and incorporate more ways to improve the amount of pleasure reading done by middle school students. The research is clear that student achievement increases as the amount of time spent pleasure reading

increases (Krashen, 1993). The research also indicates that motivational factors, such as owning books, having the opportunity to choose books from a wide variety of interesting topics, being read to aloud, discussing books, seeing others read, and having time to read, work with children (Irvin, 1998; Koskinen & Palmer, 1994; Leonhardt, 1997; Odean, 1998). However, finding ways to incorporate these proven theories into practice in order to motivate more students to read in middle schools must continue to be explored. Although many students at Reynolds Middle School read for pleasure, there are still many who do not.

Observations were made by the researcher concerning successes and failures in pleasure reading during the practicum. One successful area of pleasure reading, based on informal meetings with teachers as well as administrators' observations, was the sixth-grade reading clubs. Sixth graders were observed by the researcher to be consistently involved in pleasure reading during the reading clubs. Sixth-grade teachers also seemed to be very supportive of the reading clubs. It should be noted that all sixth-grade teachers at Reynolds Middle School teach reading, creating a situation in which all sixth-grade reading clubs are supervised by a reading teacher. Additionally, even though there are only two reading teachers per grade in seventh and eighth grade, reading teachers in those grades also reported positive outcomes in reference to the reading clubs during

informal meetings with the researcher. All reading classes have classroom libraries that provide much pleasure-reading material for reading club use. The availability of interesting reading material as a motivational factor in reading has been well documented in the review of the literature.

Nonreading teachers in other grades who took the initiative to acquire reading materials and model reading also reported positive results regarding the reading clubs. Some of the more successful reading club advisors reported that they provided additional reading materials such as paperback books, magazines, and newspapers. They stated that providing these additional materials improved their reading clubs. A need to find more ways to provide classrooms with vast amounts of interesting, age-appropriate materials should continue to be explored by the administration. Encouraging more students to sign books out of the library should also continue to be a priority.

Excitement about books can become contagious. During September 1999, it became apparent that the *Harry Potter* series was generating much enthusiasm at Reynolds Middle School. J. Slominski (personal communication, November 1999), a sixth-grade teacher, stated that "having a *Harry Potter* book is a status symbol with the students." More books of the *Harry Potter* caliber should be sought by the administration to increase the level of interest in reading

of middle school students.

Because several teachers reported that reading aloud over the intercom and reading aloud to students by reading club advisors were motivating to students, reading aloud was continued over the intercom and encouraged by administrators. Reading aloud is an activity that the researcher believes was overlooked in the past at Reynolds Middle School and should be a part of any middle school reading program. The amount of time students are read to should be increased in all middle schools.

Limitations

The two biggest obstacles to overcome in increasing pleasure reading by middle school students are time and money. With so much emphasis on state and federal core curriculum content standards, standardized test scores, and increasing mandated academic course requirements, there is little time left in the school day for pleasure reading. There is also little money left in the budget for pleasure-reading materials to be purchased for students. The demands on student time for school, family, social activities, and extracurricular activities leave little or no time for pleasure reading. Additionally, money spent by parents on students usually involves purchases of clothes, videotapes, computer and software games, and leisure and sport activities. Little if any money is left over for books.

Another constraint that impedes pleasure reading by middle school students is the lack of good literature for preteens and teenagers. Teen interests tend to branch out to areas with which parents and educators are uncomfortable. Thus, books that teens might be interested in are not available to students. Consequently, teens tend to satisfy their curiosities through movies, videotapes, computer games, and conversation. Interestingly enough, there are few times in history when these items have been censored, but books are frequently censored. The lack of books and abundance of other avenues of teen interest create a huge constraint in the researcher's opinion.

Leadership

A. Ellis teaches a course at Nova Southeastern University, entitled Educational Leadership Appraisal (ELA), as part of the National EdD Program for Educational Leaders. Part of that course is dedicated to a concept developed by Ellis (1995) known as behavior styles. Ellis has identified four behavior styles that administrators exhibit. The four behavior styles comprise supporters, promoters, controllers, and analyzers. Ellis stated in class that administrators typically have tendencies toward one or two behavior styles (personal communication, September 1996). Although administrators can learn to function in styles outside their preferred behavior style, they will, according to Ellis, revert to their comfort zone and familiar behavior style

when under stress.

The researcher took the Behavior Characteristics Rating Form as part of the ELA and then performed a self-rating according to the Behavior Matrix (Ellis, 1995). The researcher's score indicated that the researcher was a supporting promoter. Interestingly, the score on the vertical scale placed the researcher at 29 out of a possible 30, indicating that the researcher exhibits almost an absence of controller and analyzer behaviors. On the horizontal grid, the researcher scored 22 out of a possible 48, putting the researcher just 1 point to the left of the 50th percentile between supporter and promoter. A. Ellis (personal communication, September 1996) referred to this score as supporting promoter.

This appraisal pointed to some of the researcher's strengths and weaknesses on the job and in relationships as a supporting promoter. Some strengths include being cooperative and willing to please, being imaginative and socially outgoing, and being accepting of different styles of people. Weaknesses of a supporting promoter would include lacking concern for detail, jumping to conclusions too rapidly, appearing careless in approach, and lacking interest in planning.

Completing the practicum for his doctoral program at Nova Southeastern University has forced the researcher to demonstrate some of the characteristics of a controller and

especially those of an analyzer. Some of the controller behaviors the researcher exhibited during this practicum included providing leadership; maintaining efficiency; meeting time lines; ensuring that organization and structure existed; and making sure that communication was functional, direct, and to the point. Some of the analyzer qualities the researcher exhibited were the ability to complete tasks, to be factual, and to develop practical routines for a structured framework. Working in controller and analyzer quadrants was a growth experience for the researcher.

Implications

Although the review of the literature clearly indicated that pleasure reading improves student achievement (Atwell, 1998; Irvin, 1998; Krashen, 1993), it still continues to be overlooked in many middle school curricula. Neglecting to give pleasure reading the attention it deserves at the middle school level will continue unless a concerted effort is made to provide time and materials for this important activity. One reason pleasure reading tends to be overlooked at the middle school level is the increasing importance placed on test outcomes resulting in a premium being placed on classroom instruction time. A possible solution for improving pleasure-reading offerings would be federal and state initiatives designed to make pleasure reading a priority, ensuring that each student has the experience of pleasure reading guaranteed through public education.

The ideal pleasure-reading program at the middle school level would incorporate many or all of the motivational factors mentioned in the review of the literature. A comprehensive pleasure-reading program should provide the following:

1. Many interesting materials for students to choose.
2. Time for students to choose and read books on a regular basis.
3. A chance for students to discuss books they have read with teachers and peers.
4. Teachers regularly modeling reading for students.
5. Support for students choices in reading.
6. Pleasure-reading book choices for a variety of reading levels within a specific age group.

It is also the researcher's belief that students who engage in pleasure reading have better conflict resolution skills because books allow them to see other points of view. The other points of view students are exposed to during pleasure reading include authors' points of view as well as various characters' points of view. Readers can develop empathy as they see what happens to characters as easily as if they were witnessing a real situation. The researcher also believes that books can give pleasure readers the ability to live a problem vicariously through characters in a story. For example, the readers could use books to explore vicariously a struggle with drug abuse or physical or verbal

abuse. Readers can imagine and examine problems and solutions without putting themselves in any jeopardy involved with the risks of actually exploring that behavior.

Further studies are needed to determine how best to incorporate motivational factors of pleasure reading into the middle school curriculum. It is anticipated that more changes in the form of enhancements and additions to the present reading club program will take place at Reynolds Middle School. Further changes will undoubtedly take place as more suggestions from teachers, parents, students, and administrators are received. These changes, of course, will be implemented based on continually updated research on pleasure reading.

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Appendixes

Appendix A

Take Time To Read Memo, September 1996

REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

To: All Staff
From: Mr. Fazzino
Date: September 17, 1996
Subject: Club Revision for the 1996-97 School Year

The Club Revision Committee met in the Spring and, recently, on September 10 to discuss possible changes in our club program. Those in attendance included: Mr. Vedral, Mrs. Connor, Mrs. Wheeler, Mrs. Langellotti and Mrs. Morgan. It was agreed that an alternative to our present club program should be offered to the students. The revised club program, beginning Friday, October 4 will give students the opportunity to "Take Time To Read."

Students and homeroom teachers will use the period for independent reading for enjoyment (appropriate books, magazines, textbooks and newspapers of personal choice). Teachers should remind students to bring appropriate reading material to reading club each Friday. The new club is planned with a simple format and has few procedures to encumber teachers.

--No formal lesson planning.
--Optional alternatives: Read to class
 Use of guest readers
 Share items to read

So remember, beginning Friday, October 4, 1996, eighth period will be: "TAKE TIME TO READ!"

Please note, the following clubs will remain in our club program, along with the "Take Time to Read" offering. Teachers supervising these clubs will continue to recruit students as in the past. Club members' names must be provided to the Main Office and participating students homeroom teachers.

Computer Club	C-9	Mrs. K. Blair
Drama Club	Auditorium	Mrs. Chernoski
Drill Team	Cafeteria	Mrs. Morgan
Eighth Grade Keyboarding	C-7	Mrs. DeSantis
Environmental	B-101	Mrs. McGinn
Intramurals	Gymnasium	P.E. Staff
Jazz Club	A-106	Mr. Balog
Math	B-106	Mrs. Lombardi
Multicultural Club	C-1	Mrs. Wheeler
Newspaper	A-108	Dr. Hauenstein
Student Council	Library	Miss. Konjushok
Weather Club	C-4	Mr. Bencivengo
Yearbook	B-105	Mr. Morgan

Appendix B
Student Survey Form

Student Reading Survey

Name_____

Grade_____ Age_____

Do you read for pleasure? Yes_____ No_____

What is the best book you have ever read?_____

What is your favorite kind of book? (Circle one)

mystery romance adventure science fiction

biography sports romance poetry historical

other_____

Who is your favorite author?_____

How do you choose which book you read?_____

Appendix C

Faculty Survey Form

Reynolds Middle School
Faculty Survey
"Take Time to Read" Club Program

Please take a minute to answer the question below (with added comments if you wish" and return it to Kathy Morgan's mailbox by 3:15 PM, Monday, January 27, 1997

Do you think the "Take Time to Read" program is working in your homeroom? _____

If NO, why not?

What would you suggest to make the program work better?

Appendix D

District Factor Grouping

Appendix E
Student Reading Survey

Reynolds Middle School
Student Reading Survey

In order to better service the students at Reynolds Middle School the following survey has been developed to determine the reading interests of Reynolds students. With this in mind please respond to the following questions using the number scale indicated.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

(Circle One)

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. I read books for enjoyment. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. I read magazines for enjoyment. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. I read newspapers for enjoyment. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. I read comic books for enjoyment. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. I read for enjoyment during reading club when
I am present in reading club. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. I read for pleasure at home. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. I would read more in school if there were more
books and magazines that I like to read. |

Appendix F

Teacher Reading Survey

Reynolds Middle School
Teacher Survey Concerning Reading Clubs

In order to better understand how teachers view the reading clubs the following survey has been developed. With this in mind you are requested to respond to the following questions using the number scale indicated.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

(Circle One)

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. Students are reading during the reading club. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. The reading clubs have been successful during this year. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. More readily available reading materials would help improve the reading clubs. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. The reading incentives have been successful. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. Modeling reading for the students is a useful motivational tool. |

If you have any suggestions to improve the reading club please state them in the space provided.

Suggestions:

Appendix G

Parent Reading Survey

Reynolds Middle School
Parent Survey Concerning Reading Clubs

Reynolds Middle School offers students a club program that operates each Friday during the school year. All Reynolds students participate in the club program. Students are encouraged to participate in a club that interests them. The Reynolds Middle School Club program is divided into two categories: the Take Time to Read Club program and the pullout clubs. The Take Time to Read Program provides an opportunity for students and homeroom teachers to participate in independent reading for enjoyment. Students choose from appropriate books, magazines, textbooks, and newspapers of personal choice. Teachers remind students to bring appropriate reading material to reading club each Friday. The reading club involves the following components:

1. Students are encouraged by teachers to read materials that interest them.
2. Teachers model reading while students are reading.
3. Teachers are encouraged to read to students as part of the reading club.
4. Discussion of books is encouraged by teachers.
5. Reading incentive parties for students who read at least three books and write a one page summary for each book during each semester or for the entire year.
5. The Guest Reader program which involves students inviting guest readers to their reading club between February and May.

In order to better understand how parents view the Reading Club program at Reynolds Middle School the following survey has been developed. With this in mind you are requested to respond to the following questions using the number scale indicated.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

(Circle One)

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 1. My child participates in the reading clubs. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 2. My child enjoys the reading clubs. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 3. My child talks with me about books he/she has read. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 4. My child purchases books to read for pleasure. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 5. My child takes books out of the library for pleasure. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 6. My child reads newspapers and magazines. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 7. My child reads for pleasure at home. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 8. I believe that providing school time for students to pleasure read, such as in the reading clubs, is a good idea. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 | 9. My child likes me to read to him/her. |

Appendix H

Faculty Reading Club Additions Memo, September 1999

**REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

To: All Staff
From: Mr. Fazzone
Re: Reading Club
Date: September 12, 1999

The two program additions to the reading clubs that were piloted last year will again be implemented for the 1999-2000 school year. Please keep in mind these improvements are based on concerns raised by results of a faculty survey conducted last spring.

PROGRAM ADDITIONS

1. A pizza party will be offered to any student who reads 3 or more books during the first semester, and an ice cream party offered to any student who reads 3 or more books in the second semester. All reading material must be approved by the homeroom teacher. Homeroom teachers may seek assistance from the reading and language arts teachers concerning appropriate reading material.
2. A Guest Reader program will be implemented in the second semester (the Guest Reader program will begin in February 2000).

CRITERIA FOR INCENTIVE PROGRAM

1. Any student who reads three or more books and submits a book summary for each book read during the Reading Club program.
2. Homeroom teachers must approve all reading material.
3. Homeroom teachers must submit the attached log sheet indicating students who meet the criteria by highlighting the student's name on the log sheet. The log sheets shall be submitted to Mr. Fazzone on or before the dates listed below.

INCENTIVES

Pizza party for those students who qualify during the first semester. See dates listed below.

Ice cream party for those students who qualify during the second semester. See dates listed below.

Incentive will be for grades 6, 7, and 8. This will be in addition to the Book-It incentive program which will remain in effect for the 6th graders. Pizza parties (first semester) and ice cream parties (second semester) will take place period 8 on the following dates.

Pizza

Lenape 6th: January 6, 2000
Mohawk 6th: January 7, 2000
Lenape 7th: January 15, 2000

Ice Cream

Lenape 6th: May 6, 2000
Mohawk 6th: May 18, 2000
Lenape 7th: May 14, 2000

Mohawk 7th: January 16, 2000
Lenape 8th: January 22, 2000
Mohawk 8th: January 23, 2000

Mohawk 7th: May 19, 2000
Lenape 8th: May 20, 2000
Mohawk 8th: May 21, 2000
M/L 6-7-8: June 1, 2000

The Guest Reader program will begin on February 5, 2000 and take place during the reading club period each Friday that school is in session until May 28. Guest readers will be sought to read to homerooms during this time. Homerooms shall mail invitations to local radio and television personalities, professional athletes, authors, journalists, politicians, and other noted personalities (invitations/envelopes/postage provided by Mr. Fazzone). If a guest reader is scheduled for your homeroom you will be notified of the date and who the reader will be. When they arrive please introduce the reader to your class. If a guest reader is not scheduled for your room the Take Time to Read club should be conducted as usual.

Appendix I

Take Time To Read Faculty Memo, September 1998

**REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

To: All Staff
From: Mr. Fazzone
Date: September 22, 1998
Subject: Clubs

The "Take Time to Read" club program will begin on Friday, October 2, 1998.

Students and homeroom teachers will use the period for independent reading for enjoyment (appropriate books, magazines, textbooks and newspapers of personal choice). Teachers should remind students to bring appropriate reading material to reading club each Friday. The reading club will include the same format as last year.

--No formal lesson planning.
--Optional alternatives: Read to class
 Use of guest readers
 Share items to read

**So remember, beginning Friday, October 2, 1998, eighth period
will be: "TAKE TIME TO READ!"**

Please note, the following clubs will remain in our club program, along with the "Take Time to Read" offering. Teachers supervising these clubs will continue to recruit students as in the past. Club members' names must be provided to the Main Office and participating students homeroom teachers.

Computer Club	B-104	Mrs. K.Blair
Drama Club	Auditorium	Mrs. Chernoski
Drill Team	Cafeteria	Mrs. Morgan
Eighth Grade Keyboarding	C-7	Mrs. DeSantis
Environmental	Library	Mrs. McManimon
Intramurals	Gymnasium	P.E. Staff
Jazz Club	A-106	Mr. Balog
Math	B-106	Mrs. Lombardi
Multicultural Club	C-1	Mrs. Wheeler
Newspaper	A-108	Dr. Hauenstein
Student Council	Library	Miss. Konjushok
Weather Club	C-4	Mr. Bencivengo
Yearbook	B-105	Mr. Morgan

Appendix J

Guest Reader Invitation

Dear Sir/Madam:

We would like to take this opportunity to inform you of a program we would like to implement in Grades 6 - 8 at Reynolds Middle School. It is called the Guest Reader program. The program is scheduled to begin each Friday in February, 2000, as part of our Take Time To Read program. We are soliciting your help by volunteering as a guest reader for our students. The program is designed to have role model adults, like yourself, read a passage/short story to Reynolds students during our eighth period (41 min.) each Friday. Research indicates that this type of program will help to reinforce the importance of reading. The Guest Reader program is a volunteer program that we hope will generate many interesting guest readers.

If you would like to volunteer please complete the form below and return it in the envelope provided. Once we receive your form we will mail you a schedule indicating the homeroom to whom you will read along with the homeroom teacher's name, the grade level and directions to our school. You should arrive at Reynolds Middle School on your scheduled Friday at approximately 2:00 PM. You should report to the main office (flagpole entrance) and reconfirm your assignment by checking with one of the secretaries. You will then report to your assignment at approximately 2:15 PM. Upon arriving at the classroom, you will meet the teacher who will introduce you to the students.

You can select reading passages/short stories appropriate for middle school children. Topics can range from telling students about yourself, your career, special events, and/or a reading selection. If you would like some advice on the type of readings that are appropriate for middle school please contact the homeroom teacher for whom you are assigned. We will be more than pleased to assist you. The session should last approximately 20-25 minutes with approximately 5 minutes for question and answers. At approximately 2:55 PM the session will end as our school day ends at 3:00 PM.

By volunteering your time, you are supporting and encouraging the improvement of reading skills in our youth. If you choose to volunteer, I know the program will be a success and the students, staff, and school community at Reynolds will greatly appreciate your time and services.

Sincerely yours,

James A. Fazzone, Vice Principal

**GUEST READER PROGRAM: PLEASE RETURN THIS SECTION
ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2000**

Guest Reader's Name _____

Homeroom that invited you _____ No. of Students in HR _____

Homeroom Teacher's Name _____

Tel. # at which you can be reached in the event of a school closing
due to inclement weather _____

Address

Pick from the following dates:

Your 1st choice _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

February 5, 12, 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 9, 16, 23, 30 May
7, 14, 21, 28.

_____ I will bring appropriate material for 20-25 minutes.

_____ I will need information to read.

*In the event of scheduling problems we may assign you to another
homeroom for your date.*

Appendix K

Guest Reader Invitation List

**REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

To: All Homeroom Teachers
From: Mr. Fazzone
Date: November 9, 1999
Re: Guest Reader Program

Homeroom # _____ Homeroom Teacher _____

Please list below the names and addresses of the guest readers you plan to invite. This must be turned in to me no later than December 11, 1999.

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Appendix L

Reminder to Teachers Concerning Guest Readers

**REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

To: All Homeroom Teachers
From: Mr. Fazzone
Date: December 1, 1999
Re: Take Time to Read Club Guest Reader Program

Your list of potential guest readers is due in the Main Office by, December 11, 1999 (please use the form that was provided). Please involve students in your homeroom in the invitation process. You will receive an approved list of invites by December 16. Please have students fill out invitations and envelopes during club period on December 18, 1999 based on the approved list, and return them to the main office at the end of the day.

You will be provided a list of approved guest readers on or before January 20, 1999.

Appendix M

Reminder to Teachers Concerning Invitations

**REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

TO: All Homeroom Teachers
FROM: Mr. Fazzone
DATE: December 7, 2000
RE: Take Time to Read Club Guest Reader Program

Please have students fill out invitations and envelopes during club period December 11 and 18, 2000 based on the approved list, and return them to the main office at the end of period on December 18, 2000.

You will be provided a list of approved guest readers on or before January 20, 2000.

Appendix N
Guest Reader Confirmation Letter

January 25, 2000

Dear _____,

Thank you for volunteering to read to our students as part of our "Take Time to Read" program. You are scheduled to read on _____. Please report to the main office at approximately 2:00 p.m. on your scheduled date. When you arrive in the main office, please identify yourself to one of our secretaries. The secretary will give you a guest pass and a student from the classroom will escort you to your destination. Once again we thank you for your support and dedication toward providing a quality education to our students.

In addition, if you have requested assistance with the selection of reading materials and we have not responded, please contact us at (609) 890-3761. We will immediately provide you with appropriate reading material. If someone from Reynolds has already contacted you, and/or you already have received assistance, please disregard this reminder.

Sincerely yours,

James A. Fazzone
Vice Principal

Appendix O

Approved Guest Reader Form

**REYNOLDS MIDDLE SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
APPROVED GUEST READER LIST**

Appendix P

Guest Reader List With Dates and Room Assignments Form

Appendix Q

Student Reading Survey Results

Appendix R
Teacher Survey Results

Appendix S
Parent Survey Results

Appendix Q

Student Reading Survey Results

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
I read books for enjoyment	129	214	404	119	147
I read magazines for enjoyment	321	272	103	54	63
I read newspapers for enjoyment	47	130	201	179	249
I read comic books for enjoyment	117	132	149	143	283
I read for enjoyment during clubs	77	150	202	108	269
I read for pleasure at home	150	173	175	116	159
I would like to read more if there were more books available to read	243	169	161	78	154
Totals	2223 positive		1395	1974 negative	

Appendix R

Teacher Survey Results

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students are reading during club	1	12	2	11	4
The reading clubs have helped during this year	2	6	7	9	6
More readily available resources would help improve the program	6	12	6	4	2
The reading incentives have been successful	2	8	7	6	8
Modeling reading for the students is a useful motivational tool	11	10	6	1	1
Totals	70 positive		28	52 negative	

Appendix S

Parent Survey Results

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
My child participates in reading	3	4	11	0	1
My child enjoys the reading process	2	2	5	2	2
My child talks with me about books he/she has read	2	6	4	2	2
My child purchases books for pleasure	5	4	0	6	1
My child takes books out of library for pleasure	4	5	0	5	2
My child reads newspapers and magazines	5	9	1	2	0
My child reads for pleasure	5	6	1	4	1
I believe that providing books for pleasure reading is important	12	3	0	1	1
My child likes me to read to him/her	2	6	1	4	3
Totals	85 positive		16	41 negative	

GUEST READER LIST 98-99

NAME

HR#

DATES AVAILABLE

*RMN

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E

Reynolds Middle School
Student Reading Survey

In order to better service the students at Reynolds Middle School the following survey has been developed to determine the reading interests of Reynolds students. With this in mind please respond to the following questions using the number scale indicated.

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

(Circle One)

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1. I read books for enjoyment. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2. I read magazines for enjoyment. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 3. I read newspapers for enjoyment. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4. I read comic books for enjoyment. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 5. I read for enjoyment during reading club when
I am present in reading club. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6. I read for pleasure at home. |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7. I would read more in school if there were more
books and magazines that I like to read. |

Appendix F

Appendix G

Appendix H

Appendix I

Appendix J

Appendix K

Appendix L

Appendix M

Appendix N

Appendix O

Appendix P